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DECORATION & FURNITURE

TALKS WITH DECORATORS.

III.—MRS. WHEELER ON FITTING UP A SEASIDE COTTAGE.



SEASIDE cottages have inevitably a cold aspect. Without is the wide expanse of blue and white. If the cottage overlooks a strip of beach, even in the sunshine it may be bright and dazzling, but never warm in color. For this reason," said Mrs. T. W. Wheeler, to a writer of *The Art Amateur*, "in fitting

up a home by the sea we must keep the color genial and warm within to give a sense of comfort—that feeling of livableness which we all feel the need of in a home. Almost all houses are now finished in natural woods. California red-wood is a pleasant and cheaper substitute for mahogany, and gives at once that warmth of tint of which we were speaking. When introduced in wainscoting and ceiling—and almost all country houses are now ceiled with wood—we have a body of tint which only needs diversifying. At least I would suggest that the hall—and the hall now, even in the most unpretentious and casual houses, is something more than a passageway—that the hall be wainscoted and ceiled with wood.

"But suppose that even red-wood costs too much for one of the multitude who want a home for a few months at the seaside?"

"Then use cheaper woods and the creosote stains. There is scarcely any tint that cannot be produced with them. They can be made to imitate not only the tints of all woods, but of wood after it has been beautified by time—such as those charming silvery grays seen on old, unpainted houses, and the mossy-stained greens that delight the eye."

"Then we will choose a red-tinted wood acquired in one way or another for the hall?"

"For the walls of the hall I prefer paint, and suggest either yellow or copper tints. This allows for the widest range, from cream in the one, to deep Indian red in the other. At once you feel an agreeable sensation in coming from the dazzling glare without to the warm, subdued tints within. It is this keynote to our impressions that, by virtue of its position, the hall must give, that makes its decoration a matter of consideration."

"Then its lighting is to be considered?"

"If there are no windows there will, at least, be vestibule lights, or a doorway framed in glass. Here may be stained glass, or silk curtains of lively tint. I prefer curtains, because at the seaside the view, which is always precious, must be considered, and while curtains at once give shade and color they do not shut away the view. The drawing-room should be gay and blythe, and is thus necessarily kept light in color. This is the only room I would paper; and here use ingrain papers, for not only do they come in suitable rose, light blue, and pale green tints, but their texture conveys the sense of a stuff. The value of a stuff is that it combats the idea of dampness left by the sea breezes and the creeping fogs, a dampness which is, in fact, something more than an idea. For this same reason avoid silk and wool upholstery, which is apt to get stuffy."

"Cover, then, the wall spaces with ingrain paper, and above this there might be, to give a touch of elegance, a silk frieze. A very pretty scheme is to hang at the windows silk curtains stamped with some design. Repeat the design on the frieze, and upholster the furniture in cotton canvas which is stamped with the same design."

"Will not the sea air make silks crinkle?"

"Not the washing materials made from the India vegetable silk. These will wash like chintz, and can consequently be made to look fresh with the return of each summer. But silk is only a suggestion. Friezes are painted on linen, and the scheme can be carried out in the same way with linen. I mention this repetition of design, for it gives a pleasing sense of intention without being too insistent."

"The dining-room I would wainscot four feet with cotton canvas, which comes in solid colors—deep reds and blues—of agreeable tint. The wall above paint in a lighter tint of the same color—we will say red. Next bring the wood in tone with the creosote tints of which we have spoken. Hang cotton-canvas curtains of the same tint at the window, and drape them back, and do the same with the other curtains, or they will wave like banners in the breeze. Upholster the furniture in the same material, or, for a change, in corduroy, which is now used to advantage."

"Do you prefer upholstered furniture for the seaside?"

"I was about to qualify what I said. In every way practicable a country house should differ from a town house. This is one reason why rattan furniture is to be preferred, since it can be stained to reach any tint desired. But there are always a few pieces of upholstered furniture desired for more luxurious moments, and let these be treated in the way I have suggested."

"Now, in the dining-room we have spoken of, red has been the only color mentioned. It is a possible thing to get the cotton canvas woven in two tints, say red and blue, and these might be used in draperies, particularly as they are so simply made, their decoration consisting only of the edges ravelled and knotted into fringe. Raw silk

low cotton. Then let the draperies be blue on blue repeating the design, and the furniture covered with mixed blue. Here we have a pleasant little scheme which is no more difficult to carry out than to select different papers, curtains, and upholstery. I have spoken of chintzes. Instead there are ingrains of cotton, a sort of Chambéry goods, which can be used the same way, less heavy and more amenable to drapings than the heavy cretonnes and chintzes."

"We have said nothing about adornments outside of mere furnishing—the background, as it were?"

"It is hard to speak of that, because it is so much a matter of individual taste. It is also hard to be suggestive, because suggestions depend so much on the person carrying them out, and are apt, in consequence, to defeat their own end. But it is also wonderful what the individual can sometimes effect. I had a friend who, spending the winter in the South, brought home a quantity of palmetto leaves. She arranged them in a stiff, conventional frieze, to which the spiky leaves lend themselves admirably, and it gave an air of originality and distinction to the room in her country house where she placed them."

"Oil-pictures are simply impossible in a seaside cottage owing to the bother of transportation. Moreover, they do not seem to have fitness there—oil and water you know," added Mrs. Wheeler, with a merry twinkle.

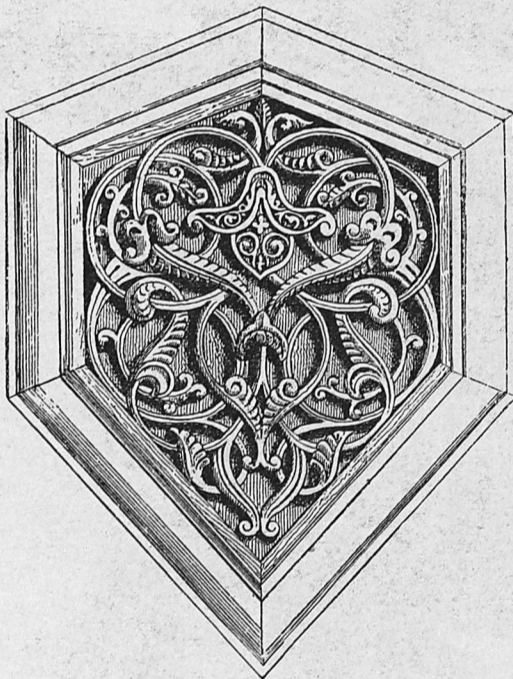
"That will not apply to water-colors?"

"No, and water-colors may very happily have a place on the walls, as well as etchings and engravings. But prints of all kind are cold, and what we want is life and color. I would suggest bits of drapery—pieces of embroidery. A piano-back for an upright piano in town, may make a wall-panel in the country, for such things can be easily carried from place to place."

"But the most valuable suggestion I have to offer is the use of the cheap glazed pieces of pottery—modern to be sure, but in glowing tints of red, yellow, blues and greens. Think what a spot of color is a yellow jar filled with nasturtiums, a rose-pink jar crowded with pink peonies, a tall white-necked vase supporting a mass of maiden's-blush roses. There seems to be no limit to the adornment of rooms that can be accomplished in this way with flowers, foliage, plants and pottery."

"But suppose the decorator is moved to introduce pale pink flowers into a deep red jar out of tone?"

"The greater probability is she will put her yellow flowers into blue jars, and her red roses into green jars. It is the complementary colors that attract the untutored eye. But we must take that risk. It seems impossible that a color sense cannot be cultivated by daily practice in this sort of decoration."



ANCIENT MORESQUE CARVED PANEL.

woven in stripes, as is done in the East, can also accompany the cotton canvases when preserving the harmony of tint, and the stripes make an agreeable diversion."

"We have said nothing about the floors?"

"Of course these in the beginning should be good, equal to anything, self-sufficient floors. Generally they are. In that case nothing can compare with rugs, or carpets made into rugs. Another advantage, which the economical housewife will appreciate, is that rugs can easily be transported from town to country, and in this way do duty for the year. But matting cannot be ignored, it is so clean and fresh-looking, so cool to the feet."

"And comes in such a variety of tints?"

"Yes, in these days of artistic house-furnishing that is a great advantage. There is no color scheme in which matting cannot be properly introduced."

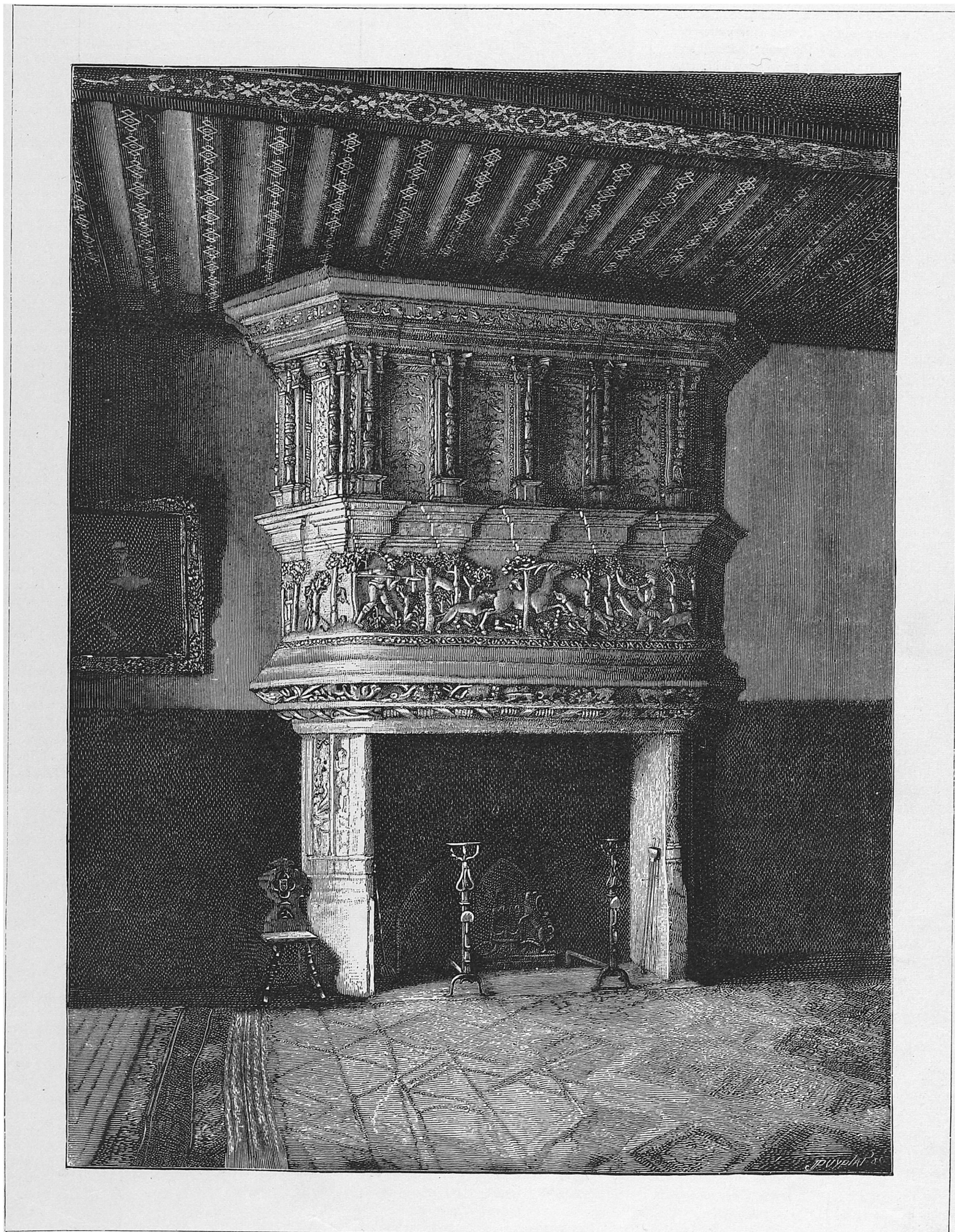
"Chintzes, you see, I have reserved for the bedrooms. Chintz is a wide term. A new variety is simply the finest American cotton stamped with some design. This makes an inexpensive wall-covering and can be simply pasted on the walls like paper. In the bedrooms it is pleasant to carry out some simple plan as was done in the drawing-room. For example, the walls are covered with one of these American chintzes, the design in blue stamped on an écru ground, the tint, that known as yel-

THE JARVES TEXTILE COLLECTION.

COLLECTORS do not often have a chance to buy, in New York, examples of the textile art work of the thirteenth to the eighteenth century. Accordingly, it would seem that very few of those interested missed the opportunity afforded by the sale of the Jarves collection, which took place March 16th and 17th, at Ortgies's Gallery. Very good prices were, in general, obtained. This was do doubt due, in part, to the exhibition of the collection, for some two or three years past, at the Metropolitan Museum, which gave everybody abundant time to judge of its merits; partly, also, to the fact that similar specimens have become, in the last few years, much more difficult to obtain in Europe. As their value to designers and manufacturers is incontestable, it is a pity that the collection was not bought for the Museum, as it might have been at a low figure when first brought here. As it is, the public is much indebted to Mrs. Hewitt, who secured one hundred and thirty of the most interesting specimens for the Cooper Institute. Another large lot was bought, it is said, for presentation to another public institution by some one whose name could not be obtained. This purchase included specimens of Sicilian Arab stuff, worked in gold and silk; breast pieces or "pettitini" of Venetian ladies' dresses of the fifteenth

and sixteenth centuries, in brocade, embroidered in silks and gold; Lombard raised velvet of the sixteenth century; Venetian brocade in silver, gold, and salmon color; net-work in gold wire; coat and waistcoat embroideries of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and several examples of figure subjects (the Madonna, the Annunciation, the Madonna and Saints), woven in damask of several colors, some with gold. The

Florence, A.D. 1400; Genoese polychromatic raised velvets; linen embroideries and early Arab designs for towel borders. Mrs. Hewitt also bought several fine chasubles and other church vestments, which are likewise to go to the Cooper Institute. A chasuble of crimson velvet, with scrolls of oak leaves and acorns in blue and white satin applied, from the palace of the Duke of Urbino, brought \$245. One



OLD FIREPLACE IN THE SALLE DES GARDES, AT THE CHATEAU DE FLEURIGNY.

Cooper Institute will obtain Venetian brocades, damasks, and gold and silver tissues of the fifteenth century; a rare Sicilian green damask with bird pattern, of the fourteenth; Florentine raised velvet on gold ground, of the fifteenth; an Arab stuff in brown and black, of the thirteenth, from Lucca; embroideries of cherubs in crimson and gold, of the fifteenth, from Sienna; red and white diaper in silk and linen, from

in blue satin, brocaded with foliage, landscapes, houses and ships, Venetian, seventeenth-century work, brought \$135. Separate small pieces of embroideries, silks, velvets, many imperfect, brought from \$6 to \$40 each. A Venetian rose point shawl, 11 ft. long by 4 ft. deep, sixteenth-century work, went for \$1000. Other small pieces of laces, mostly of the last three centuries, averaged about \$5.